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**GUIDE TO THE LITERATURE OF CITIES: Abstracts And Bibliography**  
**Part V: Urban Renewal**

Morris Zeitlin

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## GUIDE TO THE LITERATURE OF CITIES:

## ABSTRACTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

## PART V: URBAN RENEWAL

by

Morris Zeitlin

## INTRODUCTION

As in the life of society itself, change in the life of cities implies both decay and renewal. Economic and technological changes alter social-class compositions and political movements, cause population shifts, and affect culture and family life. These changes, in turn, add obsolescence to the normal wear and tear of urban physical plant. A vigorous society responds to new urban social needs with timely regeneration. Though it may shed obsolete forms slowly, its fulfillment of new life needs outstrips decay and keeps city life robust. The reverse is true of a decadent or a decadent society. As its inner contradictions sharpen, the obsolescence and disorganization of its cities multiply and vital regeneration slows down.

The study of urban renewal tries to deal with the normal process of urban obsolescence and regeneration. In the United States, however, the term "urban renewal" has become confused with the federal urban renewal program. Like other federal urban programs, it has served the narrow interests of a powerful few and played havoc with urban life, causing an outcry of critique and controversy.

The following abstracts represent both the literature dealing with theoretical inquiry into the normal dialectical life processes of cities and with the effects of the federal urban renewal program, often in the same works.

## URBAN RENEWAL

## ABSTRACTS OF SELECTED WORKS

Woodbury, Coleman, Editor. Urban Redevelopment: Problems and Practices. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953. 525pp. Tables. Charts. Bibliographies.

This volume and its companion (see abstract of Coleman Woodbury, The Future of Cities and Urban Redevelopment), produced by the Chicago University Urban Redevelopment Study, constitute the most comprehensive survey of urban redevelopment up to the date of their publication. They define urban redevelopment "as those policies, measures and activities that would do away with the major forms of urban blight and bring about changes in urban structure and institutions contributing to a favorable environment for a healthy civic, economic, and social life for all urban dwellers."

The present volume draws on the actual experience of leaders in redevelopment: public officials, civic leaders, investors, and students of urban life. It identifies urban redevelopment problems and issues, relates them to the goals of development, analyzes available experience and publications, recommends policies and procedures, and suggests further inquiries and studies.

In his "Measuring the Quality of Housing in Planning for Urban Redevelopment," Allan H. Twitchell explores the factors that govern the value of housing surveys; the types of surveys; procedures used in their preparation; and the evolution of surveys.

In his "Urban Densities and their costs: An Exploration Into the Economics of Population Densities and Urban Patterns," William H. Ludlow finds social aspects more important than economic aspects. In fact, he concludes, "the area that cannot compete in meeting human needs will also not be able, in the long run, to compete economically." He considers practical densities and locations of redevelopment projects, and outlines needed studies.

Charles S. Ascher discusses "Private Covenants in Urban Redevelopment," their legal foundations and their use in urban redevelopment programs.

William L. Slayton, in "Urban Redevelopment Short of Clearance," deals with the place of rehabilitation, reconditioning, and conservation measures in urban redevelopment.

Other parts of the volume relate the Chicago experience with "Relocation of Families Displaced in Urban Redevelopment," and discuss "Eminent Domain in Acquiring Subdivision and Open Land in Redevelopment Programs."

Woodbury, Coleman, Editor. The Future of Cities and Urban Redevelopment. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954. 764pp.

Like its companion (see abstract: Woodbury, Coleman, Editor. Urban Redevelopment: Problems and Practices), this volume was produced by the Chicago University Urban Redevelopment Study. Of the two, it is the more general and less technical in scope. In their essays, planners and scholars examine the basic economic and political contributors to physical blight; analyze the social ills that block the long-range objectives of redevelopment; define the health, comfort and convenience needs of city dwellers; and consider the objectives and values of urban life.

Catherine Bauer, in "Redevelopment: A Misfit in the Fifties," sees the federal redevelopment program rendered ineffective by inner conflicts. The chronic housing shortage, she thinks, "cancels most of the social arguments for slum clearance until the supply of low-rent homes available elsewhere has been enormously increased."

In "The Regional City," G. Holmes Perkins expects future cities to "assume a special character growing out of a 'town that will serve men better.'"

In "What Kind of Cities Do We Want?," Henry S. Churchill reiterates briefly the longer statement of his book, The City Is the People (Reynal & Hitchcock, 1945).

Robert C. Weinberg, in "Not By Bread Alone," pleads for "incorporation of the design element as an integral part of the plan of the new community."

Arthur B. Gallion considers "Civic Design and Democracy." He defines civic design as "the form and arrangement of the whole urban environment." Civic design must improve through democratic action, i.e. "the rules and regulations established by representative government...." Gallion thinks that contemporary civic design standards are deficient and calls for "the restoration of the human scale."

In "Townscape and the Architect," Vernon De Mars thinks that too much faith is being placed in planning as such. He sees a danger that "faith in planning techniques can well become a substitute for thinking," and pleads "for greater knowledge of people's needs and desires on the part of planners and architects."

In several chapters, Coleman Woodbury examines "Industrial Location and Urban Redevelopment," "Location Theory and Practice," "Regional Distribution and Trends in Industrial Location," and "Security Considerations in Industrial Location." He thinks that urban planning theory and practice have slighted the dialectics of cities (i.e. their processes of growth and decline), and attempts to analyze and explain some aspects of urban change. Some of his conclusions:

1) "The location of industries within an urban metropolitan area is one of the chief factors in determining its over-all structure and land-use pattern," 2) "Even in a dynamic economy, the distribution of industrial activity changes relatively slowly," 3) "The techniques and methods of industrial and economic analysis appropriate to urban planning and development are...crude and elementary," 4) Dispersal of industry as a defense measure is difficult because "large proportions of (American) industry and population are highly concentrated," 5) Although moderate dispersal of industry and population "would reduce substantially...vulnerability to atomic attack ...there is no such thing as complete or nearly complete protection against the dangers of atomic bombing." Woodbury concludes with a summary of some local and nation-wide studies of industrial decentralization.

William L. Slayton and Richard Dewey discuss "Urban Redevelopment and the Urbanite." Their survey of pertinent literature leads them to conclude that "little enough is known about the physical, let alone the psychological and social, needs of urban dwellers." They urge research to determine the wants of urbanites for a full and satisfying social life, and their physical needs in arrangement of space, buildings and facilities. They then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the sample survey as a tool in such research, outline an analytical approach to such study, and point to specific areas of investigation. The authors recognize as basic the "needs for physical comfort and for economy in the expenditure of energy, and the universal socially acquired needs for 1) recognition by one's fellows, 2) affection and companionship, 3) a variety of experience, and 4) a feeling of security." "Any plan," they say, "that might properly be called comprehensive must be geared to all of these complex needs, physiological and social." They go on to discuss the attitudes that urbanites hold toward development and list the attitudes that might be expected toward large clearance and rebuilding projects. They point to the need for, and the techniques and functions of, community organization in the urban redevelopment process. Community organizations, they think, "have possibilities for democratic action...that could affect our whole conception of the role the citizen can play, locally at least, in a democracy."

Victor Jones' essay on "Local Government in Metropolitan Areas," is a summary of his extensive treatment of the subject in his book Metropolitan Government (University of Chicago Press, 1942).

Completing the volume, Woodbury reviews the "Background and Prospects of Urban Redevelopment in the United States." He draws on the findings and insights of his colleagues and adds some of his own on the nature of cities, their history in the past half-century, their trends, and their problems.

Colean, Miles L. Renewing Our Cities. New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1953. 181pp. Extensive footnote references.

Colean perceives the city as a complex structure of interacting parts in a process of growth, decay, and renewal, that is subject to human mastery and control. He suggests ways to prune out the decay and nourish growth to achieve planned objectives of better living.

Society's goals, says Colean, keep changing to meet the needs of succeeding generations. The problems of a living city are therefore endless and its form never complete. In its cycle of development, the city's parts change at different times by different degrees as a new generation uses what the previous one transmitted, abandons or replaces outworn parts, and adds new ones. Acute problems arise when renewal lags behind the flow of change. Accumulated decay then interrupts the cycle of development and causes stagnation within the urban structure.

American cities stagnate, Colean thinks, because their legal, political and fiscal mechanisms "are either faulty in themselves or are hampered in use by a confusion about objectives." He ascribes the confusion to rapid city growth which "came almost too fast for thought and certainly too rapidly for foresight." The author then briefly examines the history of American cities from the industrial revolution to the 1950's. He dwells at some length on the postwar obsession with atomic defense and the contradiction it posed. To save the cities, such defense dictated dispersion -- an act that would ruin the very cities it had meant to secure. He discusses some problems that the growth of cities and their inner social conflicts have produced: should government policy concentrate on the salvage of the central city or should it promote the growth of the entire metropolitan area? How to clear slums? How to care for displaced, if slums are to be cleared? How to decongest the ghettos in the face of racial prejudices in housing? How to draw private investors into relatively unprofitable urban renewal? How to overcome air and water pollution, increase municipal revenues, stop and exodus of industry and jobs, improve education, pay for rising welfare costs, cope with increasing delinquency? "None of these questions," he states, "has yet been satisfactorily answered." But he sees a growing public interest in urban problems and believes that once "objectives are clarified, the achievements...will be great."

Colean cautions against confusing slum and renewal problems as being identical. The renewal problem, says he, is chiefly one of physical and economic renewal, though it involves social, esthetic, political and other factors. But slums are "basically a problem of the attitudes and behavior of people and of the indifference of the community to the neglect and victimization of the underprivileged." He discusses the two at length describing, analyzing, defining, drawing conclusions, and proposing measures for their solution.

On slums:

1. Better housekeeping in the slums -- by the individual families, property owners and the municipality -- would improve the general vitality of the city. It should be promoted through education of slum dwellers, expanded municipal services, and enforcement of sanitation laws.
2. The profitability of operating slum property should be destroyed through enforcement of safety, sanitation and tax laws.
3. Non-profit loans to owner-occupants for needed repairs should be offered.
4. Low rents should be maintained and the difference between what tenants can pay and the rent required for good maintenance should be subsidized.
5. Overcrowding "and the artificial revenue base that overcrowding permits" should be prevented.
6. To aid renewal, abandoned buildings should be condemned and demolished.

On renewal:

1. Renewal is needed when and wherever buildings, streets, utilities, etc., no longer give the best use to which the area may be put. But it tends to occur, mostly, when and where high demands develop for more intense and profitable land use than that in existence.
2. In a spreading city, some renewal takes place at the core where high-profit prospects lure builders to replace even good structures on high-priced land. But most new development tends to leap over obsolete urban areas, favoring the cheaper peripheral land. And the poor, displaced from the outskirts, tend to inhabit the leaped over blocks. To invite renewal, a city must show its older areas to have greater advantages for the uses to which peripheral areas are put.
3. Renewal thrives on urban prosperity. A city must adapt and expand its economic base and heed the needs and claims of industry and commerce.
4. These inhibit renewal: a weak municipal administration; poor municipal utilities and services -- poor schools, poor transportation and traffic regulation, poor police and fire protection; poor terminal facilities; poor or poorly enforced sanitary and occupancy laws; housing shortage; air and water pollution; excessive street noise; high local taxes; building laws that needlessly raise building costs; real-property laws that impede large-parcel assembly; the competition of other, highly profitable, investment opportunities.

5. Racial prejudices force intense occupancy of ghetto slums, cause relocation difficulties, and limit renewal.
6. A housing surplus is necessary to lower the prices of obsolete buildings and permit their clearance for renewal.
7. Rivalry between local governments within metropolitan regions weakens the ability of cities to renew themselves.

Coleman finds that the renewal efforts in American cities, though widespread, are scattered and piecemeal. He urges clear renewal objectives, wide citizen interest in renewal, and efforts to coordinate comprehensive planning and action on a metropolitan scale.

Wilson, James Q., Editor. Urban Renewal: The Record and the Controversy. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1966. 683pp.

A collection of twenty-six essays, previously published in various books and professional journals, by distinguished planners, sociologists, political scientists, economists, lawyers, editors, and federal government officials. The volume is a valuable reference and sourcebook on the federal urban renewal program and the controversy surrounding it. Its essays are grouped in the following eight sections:

- I. The Economics of Cities and Renewal
- II. Urban Renewal: Background and Goals
- III. Urban Renewal in Practice: Three Cases
- IV. Relocation and Community Life
- V. Government and Citizen Participation in Urban Renewal
- VI. Planning and Design
- VII. Challenges and Responses
- VIII. The Future of Urban Renewal



Bellush, Jewel and Murray Hausknecht, Editors. Urban Renewal: People, Politics, and Planning. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1967. 542pp.

A useful review of the issues and problems of urban renewal. The editors selected excerpts from the works of about thirty authors to effect a debate on the problems of the city and urban renewal as a public policy. They try "to recapture the clamor of controversy by matching opposing points of view... wherever possible."

Of the volume's six parts, Part I examines the history and the basic constitutional issues of urban renewal. Part II raises questions about the policy's objectives, especially slum clearance. Part III discusses urban renewal politics, institutional structure, organization, and citizen participation. Part IV debates the successes and failures of urban renewal, especially the issues of relocation and public housing. Part V describes, and tentatively assesses, innovations and new ideas in urban renewal.

Abrams, Charles. The City Is the Frontier. New York: Harper & Row, 1965. 394pp. Tables.

In a detailed critical analysis of the federal urban renewal program, Abrams discusses its failure to improve the physical conditions and social environment of American cities, its recent changes, accomplishments, and his proposals for its reform.

The work opens with a short history of American cities and the rise of anti-city attitudes in American ideology; a review of the present state of the cities and their suburbs; and a study of the causes of central-city decline -- racial discrimination, narrow tax policies, inadequate housing, and lack of comprehensive planning.

Begun in the 1930's -- the years of slum surplus -- the slum clearance program gained political momentum and extended, wrongly, into years of housing shortage. Abrams explains why the suburbs were chosen for federal stimulus in housing construction, whom and how the program helped, and how its credits to speculative builders promoted big developers and real estate speculators. He criticizes the 1949 amendments to the Housing Act: permitting mass destruction of low-rent housing to clear sites for luxury apartments, they turned a law originally aimed to "improve public welfare in housing" into one to serve the "welfare of private enterprise." He then cites the improvement in the 1954 amendments and analyzes the successes and failures that followed.

The basic weakness of the renewal program, Abrams thinks, is that it was not conceived to solve the over-all problems of cities. Like other federal programs bearing on city problems, it is based on fictions (Abrams lists and debunks them) and lacks a clear purpose. It has failed to attract developers (Abrams explains their financial interests and manipulations) because decaying cities have a limited upper-income-tenant market. The urban renewal program should be expanded, he states, but it must aim to improve the cities rather than promote speculative projects. It cannot satisfactorily relocate the inevitable displacees (Abrams reviews studies of their fate on past projects) where a low-rent housing shortage exists. Construction of subsidized low-rent housing must precede demolition. Such housing should be built on vacant land, in small projects financed by low-interest federal loans, and the suburbs made to share in its cost. In addition, freedom of housing choice must be guaranteed everywhere for all income, racial, and minority groups.

The federal government, with its huge resources and influence, states Abrams, has become the primary force in the creation and re-creation of environment. The destiny of cities is at the mercy of its policies. To achieve sound housing, the federal government must strive to achieve sound cities. Only it has the means and authority to renew them. But it is checked by antiquated theories of state rights, home rule, and local authority (Abrams discusses the intricacies and obsolescence of the system). State and federal functions regarding cities must be re-defined realistically. The federal government must deal with the cities directly without the consent of the states and their political creatures whose spokesmen obstruct pro-city legislation (Abrams documents such obstructions) and must "forgo the condition...that speculative private enterprise shall be the preferred agent to fulfill the (sound housing) objective."

"The nation's first task," concludes Abrams, "is to bring the national perspectives, political powers, influence, and resources more in line with the responsibilities of urban society -- by consensus, if possible, or by taking the issue to the people, if necessary."

The work illuminates the intricacies of debt financing city budgets, government insurance and financing of housing, and the profitability to investors of tax exempt bonds. It also presents a "blue-print for American cities," discussing "prospects and aspects of urban life and development which are generally not considered in official plans."

Anderson, Martin. The Federal Bulldozer: A Critical Analysis of Urban Renewal, 1942-1962. Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1964. 272pp. Tables. Charts. Bibliography.

"The purpose of this book," says Anderson, "is to examine closely how the urban renewal program has worked and to compare its results with those recorded by private enterprise." He thinks that because the program "attempted to run counter to the tide of the private market -- the results have been dismal." It has admirable goals but "it has not and cannot achieve them. Only free enterprise can."

Some of the author's findings, opinions and conclusions:

1. Reponding to market forces, private enterprise has greatly reduced the housing problem which the urban renewal program set out to solve in 1949. Between 1950 and 1960 it increased the number of standard dwelling units in major cities by sixty-three percent.
2. The role of the middle-income groups is not diminishing in big cities. The proportion of middle-income to low- and high-income groups has not changed since 1950.
3. The program worsened the housing problem for low- and middle-income groups and favored the high-income groups. It demolished 126,000 low-rent homes and replaced them with 28,000 high-rent homes. Of the total value of new construction by 1961, it devoted 56% to high-rent apartments, 6% to publicly subsidized housing, and 38% to nonhousing construction of which 24% financed public works (parks, schools, libraries, roads, sewerage systems, etc.) most of which will be enjoyed by new occupants of high-rent apartments.
4. The program does not clear slums; it merely shifts them to new locations. The low-income families displaced by demolition of old housing, of whom 60% were Negro and Puerto Rican, went "into housing as bad or worse...in neighborhoods as bad or worse...and they often pay higher rents at the new locations." By 1963, the program forced over 600,000 people to leave their homes. Millions more will be displaced in the future. It also destroyed small businessmen. Of those displaced, one out of four ceased operation, and those who moved pay about twice as much rent as they were paying before.
5. The program has decreased rather than increased the tax revenues of cities. This is so because: a) The typical urban renewal project takes six to eight years between demolition and completion stages. b) Private enterprise, responding to market demand, would probably have built half or more of the program's high-rent housing on other city sites.

6. Private-developer participation in the urban renewal program is hard to come by because of the high risk and high cost involved. Although private development on urban renewal sites is potentially profitable, developers have gained little profit so far.

7. The program did poorly in channeling private funds into the rebuilding of cities. To each dollar the government invests in urban renewal, private investment adds one dollar not four dollars as the government has claimed.

8. The program plays an insignificant role in the economy of the United States and a very small role in the economy of cities. It contributed about 0.2% of all 1950-1960 construction activity and about 1.3% of construction activity in cities.

One of the book's two appendixes contains 18 tables of statistical data demonstrating the performance of the urban renewal program. The other contains research notes explaining some of the author's manipulations of statistical data and his conclusions.

Doxiadis, C. A. Urban Renewal and the Future of the American City. Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1966. 174pp. Maps. Charts. Diagrams.

Reporting on a study he conducted for the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, Doxiadis presents an overall view of the problems and prospects of urban renewal in the United States, and a set of proposed principles for formulating and appraising urban renewal programs.

Among his comments:

1. Urban renewal has had no clear plan. Its scope and efforts have been limited, and its present policies and programs cannot cope with the dangerously mounting urban problems. Instead of being single-project oriented and detached from the problems of the host cities, the urban renewal program should be comprehensive and national in scope, encompass whole regions, and be geared to expected long-range changes.

2. Urban renewal is difficult and complex because it tries to change existing city functions "within a living organism that cannot cease to operate."

3. The unprecedented growth of peripheral settlements is the primary cause for the problems of cities. Decentralization solves nothing. As long as its products remain part of the same urban region they continue to draw on the central city's resources. Rather, a new kind of centralization is needed -- one of a higher order in which "the entire urban organism (is) reconstructed." The new structure would be composed of "cells that do not grow but multiply...units that can be self contained...and that are able to develop an internal struct-

ure.... Experience has (shown) that such cells can be of an average size of 6,000 by 6,000 feet...allowing for human scale in between a system of highways and lines of transportation at rational distances. Thus a tissue is formed consisting of many static and a few dynamic cells. The static cells are not going to suffer from change, and...will not need planned urban renewal. The dynamic ones, however...will need a radical renewal in order to be adjusted to their new functions."

4. The nation needs a new interdisciplinary science to "understand the complicated problems of...human settlement" and to guide a national program for urban renewal based on "a broad strategy aiming at the preservation of human values."

Dyckman, John W. and Reginald R. Isaacs. Capital Requirements for Urban Development and Renewal. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1961. 334pp. Tables. Charts.

In an attempt to estimate the cost of a national crash program for urban renewal, Dyckman and Isaacs assess how much urban renewal the nation can afford, the policy changes the task would require, and what possible effects such policy changes would have. They embarked on the study to help fill the lack of central planning in an unplanned economy in which public and private policy makers are guided by "forecasts of the probable drift of...generally unmanaged forces."

Several reasons, the authors state, make a national urban renewal program urgent: (1) The rapidly deteriorating physical plant of American cities. (2) The need to keep the huge capacity of the construction industry going lest a building slack start "a sharp downward spiral in the whole economy." (3) The cities' need to raise their property-tax base. (4) The need for an alternative to federal military spending should world disarmament agreements be reached.

Peace and prosperity are basic prerequisites for an all-out urban renewal program. It would be doomed by an international crisis, intensification of the "cold war," or rapid inflation. Conversely, international accommodation or a mild economic recession would make the program "highly desirable for the sustained health of the economy." But a major depression would threaten it, since a steady economic growth would be needed to implement it.

To assess the cost of the program, Dyckman and Isaacs first estimated the renewal cost of "Case City" -- a medium-size metropolitan area. Their estimate showed that for \$600 per person per year, it could, within twelve years, renew its blighted physical plant, house its whole population in standard dwellings, and refurbish its commercial, industrial and civic center. Its renewal program would add to its property

rolls at the rate of six percent per year and double the value of its existing property. The authors then checked the validity of their Case City estimate in a study of similar cities before applying it, with proper modifications, to the national urban scene. They found that for a total of \$1,300 billion the Case City renewal standards could be attained in all urban America. Of this sum, \$800 billion would be needed to finance the renewal of the metropolitan areas. For convenience, the estimate assumed a full-employment constant-price economic model. Although an investment program of this size would "increase monopolistic tendencies..." and prove inflationary, "nevertheless," the authors think, "...given time for structural adjustments in the economy, and given the needed resolution on the part of government, consumers, and private investors, renewal...(as) set for Case City could be met in most American cities within two decades."

Such a program, however, would call for total economic mobilization and the full use of the nation's resources and production capacity. For it would depend upon the "growth of adequate (capital) in some sections of the economy and on the willingness and ability of the whole economy to make what are essentially transfer payments to the areas which are bearing the greatest burden of costs (i.e. the cities) and need help." Such economic mobilization, the authors think, could yield "\$40 to \$50 billion more per year in goods and services without fundamental change in the social organization of production."

To implement the program, national economic mobilization policies should be geared to provide:

1. A steady minimum annual growth of three percent in the General National Product and two percent in output per worker.
2. Reduced spending in military, foreign aid, space exploration, and veteran-aid programs, and correspondingly higher spending in urban improvements.
3. Diversion of a larger portion of the total government take to local and state governments.
4. Increased incentives for greater private investment in cities, or greater public subsidies, or both.
5. Restriction of per capita consumption of durable goods and luxury services to modest growth; increased credit for home building, repair, or improvement; upgrading and enforcement of code requirements for maintenance of commercial and industrial buildings and sites. Barring these, introduction of "some (governmental) controls over local investment and (socialization) of some private enterprise institutions and property rights in urban land and improvement."

The authors translate these requirements into specific and detailed "suggested courses of action."

Considering the American social structure and ideology, the authors fear that "the mobilization of motives (would be) even more difficult than the mobilization of resources." Therefore, "urban planning standards would have to be 'sold' and the wants created." It would be necessary to develop a "widespread conviction of the value of improved environmental conditions... (and) various forms of direct and indirect government activity which can influence private economic behavior without directly controlling or dominating it."

But the ultimate end of national urban renewal justifies the necessary sacrifices. One of these would be a probable "holding back the rate of growth of (economic) capacity and, hence, the slowing down of future long-range growth...since renewal entails a substitution of expenditures in plant, housing, and publicly provided consumer amenities for investment in production equipment, research, and producers' goods." But "production," the authors conclude, "is not a worthy end for its own sake. Renewal must be pursued because of its value and urgency to our industrial society.... (The) cities are now loci of the bulk of investment being made in our society. On common sense grounds...the disposition of this investment must be so ordered...as to produce a truly higher level of living than that enjoyed today in the gray wear and tear of urban life."

Greer, Scott. Urban Renewal and American Cities: The Dilemma of Democratic Intervention. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1965. 192pp.

In a sociological interpretation, Greer describes, analyzes and evaluates the assumptions, goals, and results of the 1937-1961 urban renewal program. In the process, he offers a theoretical framework for evaluating large-scale programs of social control. The work reviews twenty-five years of housing and renewal legislation, some urban renewal case studies, reports of urban-renewal agencies, most of the sociological, political and economic analyses of housing and urban renewal, and adds the author's own field observations and report of interviews in some American cities.

Greer sees three changes in goals of the original 1937 Housing Act which developed as the assumptions of the Act have changed and expanded: (1) Slum removal and prevention through land clearance and new housing, and rehabilitation or conservation of gray areas through code enforcement (1937). (2) Shift in emphasis from housing to "rational" land use and downtown renewal through land clearance and resale for new and "higher" uses (1954). (3) Emphasis on comprehensive renewal of the entire city -- including new housing, downtown renewal, and general city improvement -- through large-scale land clearance and integrated development (1961). He finds three major constraints in the housing and urban renewal legislation which reduced its effectiveness as a response to social changes:

(1) Ambiguity in definitions of terms like "slums," "blight," "decent housing," and "substandard housing." (2) Ideological violation of normative prospects in regard to local autonomy and the private use of private property. (3) The organizational complexity of the program. These constraints, he thinks, placed the fate of the laws in the political process and the real estate market.

The author concludes that:

1. We know little about the forces producing the metropolis and how to cope with them, the kind of city we want and the price we are willing to pay to attain it.
2. The urban renewal program will affect little the nature and vitality of the central city. The demand for new land uses, if it occurs, will come without government intervention.
3. The urban renewal program reflects the weakness of public planning in the United States: a preference for individual freedom over public welfare, complicated by governmental fragmentation in urban areas.

Greer proposes that the urban renewal program:

1. Rigorously evaluate the consequences of proposed projects to the city and the metropolitan area as a whole.
2. Experiment in social control rather than try to answer the problems of urban change.
3. Extend FHA loans to the lower income groups.
4. Expand and improve public housing.
5. Strengthen occupancy laws to increase the Negroes' choice of housing.
6. Prohibit housing destruction without replacement.



Hartman, Chester. "The Housing of Relocated Families." Journal of the American Institute of Planners, Vol. XXX, No. 4, November 1964, pp. 266-286.

From an independent sociological study of the impact of relocation on families displaced by an urban renewal project and a review of reports of other slum clearing projects (1933 to 1963), the author draws these conclusions:

1. Relocation did little to improve the housing conditions of slum-based families. About two-thirds of the uprooted still lived in substandard homes, suffered greater congestion, and paid more rent.
2. Families that relocated satisfactorily were apparently prepared financially, personally and socially for upward mobility. The least prepared, especially nonwhite families, suffered the most from the loss of familiar places and persons and the difficulties of adjusting to new environments.
3. Inefficiency or callousness of relocation-agency personnel and the shortage of low-rent housing have often caused relocation into buildings scheduled for later clearance, forcing many families to relocate more than once.
4. Relocation intensified segregation of ethnic groups.
5. Although relocation standards have been upped since 1961, the extent of displacement, the low income and ethnic composition of the displaced, the continued short supply of low-rent housing, and the nature of public-agency personnel suggest little improvement over the past.
6. Reports of relocating agencies have understated the adverse effects of relocation on displaced families.
7. As long as urban renewal aims primarily to replace low-income with high-income housing and secondarily to rehouse slum-based families, strong pressures will continue to compromise relocation standards and to understate the impact of relocation on displaced families.

Zimmer, Basil. Rebuilding Cities: The Effect of Displacement on Small Business. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964. 363pp. Tables.

In a statistically documented survey of 350 small businesses displaced between 1954 and 1959 by urban renewal and highway projects in Providence, Rhode Island, Zimmer reports the effect of displacement on individual firms and their spatial distribution within the metropolitan area. He discusses the extent of resulting business failures, losses to the central city and to individual businessmen, the reasons for decisions to relocate in the city or suburbs, changing sales patterns resulting from forced moves, major problems of relocation, and the factors involved in seeking new sites. Although the Providence experience may vary from that in other cities, the author states, its implications are relevant to land use patterns and urban economics wherever forced relocation is planned or takes place.

Some of the study's findings:

1. Generally, the larger firms survived and some even profitted from the move. But three out of ten did not survive. Many small firms suffered losses, and many perished.
2. Low-scale-volume food and service stores employing less than three workers and serving mainly local ethnic groups (nearly two-fifths of the displaced firms), were hit the hardest.
3. About one-fifth of the non-survivors retired; about the same number became unemployed. Eighty-six percent reported lower incomes after relocation. All of these suffered the mental anguish that typically follows loss of livelihood and economic function.
4. Of the larger firms -- wholesaling, construction, manufacturing, and those free to relocate anywhere (seventeen percent of the displaced) -- more reported increased income than income decline after relocation.
5. Fifty-seven percent of the displaced firms moved elsewhere in the city; they were typically small, employing an average of 3.8 employees. Those who moved to the suburbs were typically larger and more affluent, employing an average of 7.2 employees. Thus the city's economy appears to have lost from the relocation more than proportionately in both tax revenues and jobs.

The study does not show whether the loss to the city of the larger firms represents pure loss; some of their trade may have shifted to other city firms. Nor does it show the economic gains to the city from the re-used land.

Millsbaugh, Martin and Gurney Breckenfeld. The Human Side of Urban Renewal: A Study of the Attitude Changes Produced by Neighborhood Rehabilitation. New York: Ives Washburn, Inc., 1960. 233pp. Illustrated.

The authors, two journalists, report the efforts of citizens in Baltimore, New Orleans and Miami to rehabilitate their own neighborhoods through community organizations, and how these efforts changed their lives. Through interviews with hundreds of slum dwellers, city employees and officials, social workers, civic volunteers and various critical observers, they traced the trials, failures and successes of each rehabilitation movement.

Among their findings:

1. Almost all residents of rehabilitated buildings and neighborhoods appreciated the physical improvements, greater comfort and cleanliness. Successful cooperation affected the attitudes of some: "More neighborly visiting developed between residents of a block; there were neighborhood social gatherings."
2. The attitudes of teenagers who tended to antisocial behavior apparently improved.
3. Children drawn into rehabilitation work responded with enthusiasm and energy and shamed indifferent parents into activity.
4. Thanks to educational case work, a few slum dwellers -- once overwhelmed by personal problems -- grew more self reliant.
5. Some politicians learned to treat slum dwellers with respect. This change in attitude varied in direct ratio with the power of the neighborhood organization.
6. Home owners and resident landlords responded to rehabilitation programs better than renters. The latter -- antagonistic to landlords, fearing higher rents, lacking neighborhood roots -- responded reluctantly. Some homeowners, too poor or otherwise unable to cope with house care, tended to "fear and evade a rehabilitation program as an additional burden...." Absentee landlords did not cooperate. "Most landlords have a built-in incentive to perpetuate the slum... due to the effect of property tax laws and assessing practices. Undertaxation of overcrowded property is the rule.... Hence the more crowding, the more profit."
7. "Rapid change (i.e. transiency) in a neighborhood... produces a basic instability that makes it almost impossible for the attitudes of rehabilitation to gather momentum."

8. The effect of rehabilitation work on non-resident workers "was directly proportional to their amount of actual contact with the neighborhood...." The closer their contact, the more their attitudes toward the slum dwellers improved.

9. In the South "...most Negroes seemed so far sunk in poverty, illiteracy and dependency...that neighborhood rehabilitation programs did not reach them with the uplifting, rejuvenating effect that was found elsewhere."

Some of the authors' conclusions:

1. Properly organized and well-managed neighborhood rehabilitation programs can produce dramatic changes in attitude -- more among the residents of the neighborhood than among outside program workers.

2. Physical measures alone cannot prevent or rehabilitate slums. Deep change in the minds of people, both in and out of the slums, are needed. "The most important effects of rehabilitation may be psychological and spiritual, rather than strictly physical."

3. Rehabilitation does not remove the cause of blight. A rehabilitated neighborhood faces "a continuing battle against the forces that would drag it downhill again." "What is needed is an approach that makes the creation of slums unprofitable and the maintenance of them financially disastrous to their owners."

4. To create lasting attitude changes among slum dwellers "a rehabilitation program must attack a host of non-housing problems, from loan sharks to juvenile delinquency."

5. Rehabilitation can change political and civic attitudes where slum dwellers participate in the decision making and daily activities of the program. "The neighborhood organization gives promise of restoring grassroots vitality to the democratic process" in cities.

Grebler, Leo. "Urban Renewal in European Countries." The Journal of American Institute of Planners, Vol. XXVIII, No. 4, November 1962, pp. 229-238. Illustrated.

The author gives these reasons for the European lag behind the United States in urban renewal:

1. Postwar reconstruction and backlog demand for housing have claimed the highest municipal investment priority.
2. Absence, or delayed emergence, of the social economic, and political factors that gave rise to the United States urban renewal program:
  - a) The suburbanization of higher income groups, retail trade and manufacturing, and the consequent impoverishment of the central cities;
  - b) The combined political efforts by aroused business, civic and other municipal groups to reverse the decline of property values in the city center;
  - c) Resort to urban renewal as a pump priming device against anticipated depression.
3. Until recently, the strong economic position of European cities whose revenues come from national income and real estate taxes.
4. Strong national housing programs that serve adequately to pump prime the economy.

Urban renewal programs are in effect in Britain, France and Denmark, and are expected in the Netherlands, Sweden, West Germany and Italy. In other countries, poverty, lag in city planning, and administrative failings will delay urban renewal for years.

European large-scale urban renewal is impelled by increasing auto traffic congestion which forces adjustment of street patterns and subway construction; by multiplying city-core functions (stores, offices, and educational, cultural and recreational establishments); and by subsidized conservation of historic sites.

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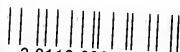






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